

Program Notice

FGIS PN-99-8

3/24/99

MINIMUM COLOR LINE FOR HARD WHITE WHEAT

1. PURPOSE

This program notice transmits information regarding the establishment and implementation of a visual color line for Hard White wheat (HDWH) by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) program.

2. BACKGROUND

At the request of the California wheat industry, GIPSA “waived” the minimum color standard for HDWH in 1994. Program Bulletin 94.19, dated July 21, 1994, announced the relaxation of the color requirements for two years, but still asked wheat breeders and wheat marketing associations to forward type samples to the Board of Appeals and Review (BAR) for review. Type samples were requested to promote uniform classification by official inspectors. Even with the relaxation of the color requirements, many varieties of commercially grown and marketed HDWH had not received the HDWH designation because type samples were not provided to the BAR for evaluation and distribution.

In July 1995, GIPSA met with representatives of the wheat industry to discuss a solution to the color issue and to map out a future strategy for classifying HDWH. In recognizing the acceptance process intended to facilitate the classification and marketing of HDWH was not fulfilling its objective, GIPSA modified the process to conform to the classification process of other wheat classes. Program Bulletin 95.15, dated September 20, 1995, stated, in part, that GIPSA would class all hard endosperm white wheat as HDWH, based on procedures established for all other classes of wheat, and that efforts would be made to continue to work with the grain industry, universities, and other government agencies to research and test potential objective methods for classing all types of wheat. Industry requested that until such time as a viable color test could be developed, accepted by industry, and integrated into the grading system, official inspection personnel continue to class all varieties of wheat in accordance with FGIS Instruction 912-1. This instruction established procedures for collection, classification, and use of variety type samples by official inspection personnel. In August 1998, GIPSA once again met with wheat industry representatives at a meeting sponsored by the U.S. Wheat Associates (USWA) to discuss establishing a minimum color line for HDWH.

This was necessitated by the pending release of HDWH varieties closely resembling Hard Red Spring wheat. GIPSA presented the USWA, HDWH committee members with a number of color choices for discussion purposes. After much discussion, the Committee members agreed on a new minimum color line for HDWH. The line selected represents a slight loosening of the color line that was originally established in 1989 and subsequently waived in 1994. However, in the opinion of the BAR, the selection represents a line that is manageable, can be applied uniformly by official inspection personnel, sets a target and provides guidelines to breeders, and would be competitive with the Australian Prime HDWH class.

To solicit input from as many interested parties as possible on the proposed minimum color line and inspection procedures for HDWH, GIPSA provided samples and a draft of this program notice to State Wheat Commissions and other industry working groups for review and comment.

After reviewing and discussing the proposed color line with their memberships, representatives from these groups convened at the National Association of Wheat Growers convention in Nashville, Tennessee, in February 1999. This forum provided an opportunity for the wheat industry to voice any comments regarding the adoption of the new color line.

3. CLASSIFICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Based upon the comments received from industry, the new color line selected at the August 1998 meetings will be adopted. The following procedures will be used in implementing the new HDWH color line:

- a. If a sample is at least as “white” or “whiter than” the color line, the lot will be classified as HDWH.
- b. If the sample is darker than the color line, it would be classified as either Hard Red Winter or Hard Red Spring wheat, depending on the morphological traits of the kernels in the sample.
- c. Wheat of Other Classes (WOCL) and Contrasting Classes (CCL) tolerances will remain unchanged and will continue to be visually determined by inspection personnel.

4. EFFECTIVE DATE

The new HDWH color line shall become effective May 1, 1999.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information regarding questions related to HDWH classification, contact:

USDA, GIPSA, FGIS
Standards and Procedures Branch
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Stop 3632, Room 1661 South
Washington, D.C. 20250-3632

Phone: (202) 720-0252 FAX: (202) 720-1015

The BAR is responsible for the distribution of the new HDWH color line photographs.
They may be contacted at:

USDA, GIPSA, FGIS
Board of Appeals and Review
10383 N. Executive Hills Blvd.
Kansas City, MO 64153-1394

Phone: (816) 891-0418 FAX: (816) 891-8070

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